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FOR AF/E:NGAREY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/28/2017

TAGS: PREL PGOV SO EUN

SUBJECT: EU SUPPORTS NEW OBSERVERS FOR SOMALIA CONTACT

GROUP WITH CAVEATS

REF: STATE 111993

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Vincent Carver for reasons 1.
4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) A European Commission official said the EC supports the bids of Canada and Yemen for Permanent Observer status in the International Contact Group on Somalia, though it would like Canada to clarify its potential financial contributions to AMISOM and the reconstruction of Somalia. Jeremy Lester, Head of Unit for East Africa and the Horn of Africa, told Poloff that Commission officials believe both Canada and Yemen are "useful" countries to have on the Contact Group. The Commission will support their inclusion at the planned September meeting in Rome.

¶2. (C) The Commission's support for the new members is tempered with concern that expanding the Contact Group risks making it unwieldy and ineffective. Lester said the Commission will encourage the Contact Group to focus on being operational and not just an international assembly for lengthy discussions.

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